

ARMY TALKS



Teamwork



Restricted

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EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES ARMY



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ARMY TALKS

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

TEAMWORK

We are preparing to take part in the biggest tug-of-war the world has ever seen. If any should let go of the rope, then we lose the match.

THOSE words were spoken only a few days ago by the man who will lead Britain's invasion forces, General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery. This brilliant commander well knew the necessity of teamwork for a winning army, and that was his way of expressing it.

Eisenhower Agrees With Montgomery

A few weeks before, the Supreme Allied Commander of all the invasion forces, our own General Dwight D. Eisenhower, expressed it in a different way, but what he had in mind was the same. In the midst of all his planning and working to prepare what Prime Minister Churchill calls "the great blow," with a hundred and one considerations claiming his attention, General Eisenhower thought it important to issue a letter on February 25th "to every American serving under my command," calling for co-operation with the British—"we must earn and keep their respect as a great military machine, dedicated to the single task of doing our duty in the

winning of this war." He called for teamwork.

What these two generals were talking about can be summed up in one word—discipline. Now "discipline" is one of those troublesome words in our English language, like "bow" or "lead" or "row," which have more than one meaning. Unfortunately, the meaning often associated with "discipline" is "punishment," but that is only one meaning of the word.

The dictionary tells us that discipline also means teaching or instruction; that discipline means training which molds, strengthens or perfects; and finally, the thing we are talking about in the army, discipline means control gained as a habit through training, by enforcing obedience or by carrying out orders—that is, orderly conduct.

Discipline Makes Team

In your Soldier's Handbook and other writings on army discipline, the point is invariably made that discipline is just another word for teamwork—for the training and spirit that make a football player or a bomber pilot or a machine gunner subordinate his own individualism to the best interests of the whole group of which he is a part. More than that, it is what

This issue of ARMY TALKS deals with the necessity for teamwork in the army, particularly in the type of warfare being waged today, and with its impact on the individual soldier. It was written by enlisted men on the staff of ARMY TALKS on the basis of suggestions made by the Chief of Special Service.

makes him responsive to the command of his leader automatically; and makes him carry on as he thinks his leader would want him to do if the leader is not there.

Selfishness Costs Life

Every soldier has enough intelligence to understand why discipline is essential in a football team—why, when the signal is given, each one of the 11 men must carry out his assignment or the play will fail and the game may be lost. And every soldier understands why teamwork is even more vitally essential in an army—why the latrine orderly must subordinate his distaste over his job to the comfort and health of his comrades—why the machine gunner must carry out his assignment, subordinating his own safety to the interests of his squad without even thinking about it. His failure may cost his life and the lives of his buddies and it may lose the battle.

There Is Discipline In Civil Life, Too

Discipline is no new thing to the American soldier. In civilian life he was subjected to discipline. He ran an errand to the grocery stores for

his mother when he preferred to play baseball. He ran his lathe at the factory or kept his books at the bank according to rules laid down by his boss, again subordinating his own interests to those of his company.

But the nature of an army calls for a subordination more rigid and unquestioned than any civilian institution. Aside from the life and death factor in battle, which is easy to understand, there is something else to consider.

Teamwork Is Vital

We have seen, in the recent ARMY TALKS entitled, "An Army Is Quite a Thing," that 90 per cent. of an army's time is spent in surviving and moving from place to place. In the disposition of millions of men, within

limited spaces, along with their weapons and equipment, orders must be issued in precise detail and must be carried out to the letter, or hopeless confusion will result. The only way this can be done is by teamwork.

Cooperation also is vital to make an invasion force such as ours will be—Americans and British, along with fighting men from the Nazi-occupied European countries,

FRANKLY, this issue of *ARMY TALKS* is about military discipline. But "discipline" means "teamwork," and we may honestly use the latter term, which is better appreciated by the average soldier, to enlist his interest in an abstract but important subject. It is particularly timely now, in advance of the great blow which we are preparing to deal the enemy.

PROBABLY no phase of these preparations is subject to more misunderstanding on the part of the average soldier than disciplinary training, its whys and wherefores. This article provides the means by which a good deal of this misunderstanding may be cleared up.

DISCUSSION of the topic, on which many soldiers hold strong views, should serve to clear the atmosphere. It may produce some arguments that go against "the book." The function of the discussion leader is not to stifle such views but to guide a full, free and constructive discussion.

all under General Eisenhower's command—an effective unified fighting team. This is what lay behind the Supreme Allied Commander's "assurance that our success in battle and our chances to return home safely and speedily are directly affected by our success in establishing here (in Britain) a reputation as a first-class, disciplined, fighting organization." The General stated that "only a self-disciplined army can win battles," and he asked all American forces to "be especially careful" concerning "improper use of motor transportation," "drinking in public places," "excessive drinking," "loud, profane or indecent language, especially in public," "slovenliness in appearance," and "any discourtesy to civilians," including driving courtesy on the road.

"Kid stuff," did somebody in the last row say? To that attitude, Colonel Elliot G. Cutler, chief consultant in surgery in the ETO, gave a good answer in a recent radio talk when he said:

"Army discipline often upsets the civilian. Largely because he doesn't understand it. But also because it was partly to escape from authority that caused the ancestors of many of us to go to America. This distaste of discipline and regimentation is an

inherited characteristic of our people. I myself yield to no one in independence of thought and action.

"But I am as profound a believer in discipline in the army as the most regular of regular officers. I have watched one son go through West Point and another Annapolis, and have studied discipline in the services from its first impact on men. And with all its mistakes,

which sometimes lead to individual unfairness, it is the soul and very breath of a good army. It is what makes for cohesiveness and unity, what gives force to a mob, and victory to the group who submit to it and live for it. We salute our superiors as a mark of our desire to serve well in our group. We dress neatly in order that we prove we can be subservient to the will of authority knowing that that authority, with proven ability to guide and command

obedience, can impose this on the enemy who would destroy us."

DISCIPLINE
+ LEADERSHIP

TEAMWORK
V
MANY TEAMS
WORKING TOGETHER
V
EFFICIENCY
V
VICTORY

SUMMARY

General Eisenhower, marshalling the men, munitions and guns for the big blow against Germany, gives concern as well to the intangible weapon of discipline. Discipline in the military sense means

teamwork. Cooperation and confidence must be developed to weld men into units, units into an army, and the American and British armies into a winning team. Americans are accustomed to discipline, but military discipline calls for unquestioned obedience in command.

What has it got to do with the success of the invasion whether or not the British respect us as a "great military machine"? Do we need to respect and understand the British? What is the definition of discipline in a military sense? Does a soldier in a non-combat outfit need to belong to the team?

Personal Discipline Pays

Discipline makes Army a team. Effect of venereal disease. Positive values of discipline. Army system pays off in battle.

Discipline is imposed upon an army to make it a team, because only a team can win. Soldiers have had to fight as a team ever since wars began. The cavalry of Ghengis Khan had to charge as a team, the Roman legions had to hurl their spears as a team, the English archers to launch their arrows as a team.

Cooperation Is More Important Than Ever

If teamwork was so essential in earlier wars, when the weapons mostly were only such as one man could use by himself, how much more vital cooperation is in this war, with its tanks, planes, infantry weapons, and artillery which a group of men must operate as coordinated units? It is vital not only for that small proportion of the army which does the actual fighting, but equally vital for that larger proportion of the army concerned with the army's survival and movement. And it is essential in an allied command such as the one under which we fight.

So it is the violation of team spirit and team operation that is the real crime underlying any infraction of discipline such as those about which General Eisenhower asked special care. For example, the disciplined soldier will not go out for a joyride in a jeep, or make a spectacle of himself in a pub: the undisciplined soldier may.

Real Crime Is That He Lets Team Down

The real crime in such conduct is not that the soldier guilty of it has a good time (if he does)—nothing wrong in having a good time. The real crime is not necessarily that he breaks a regulation—regulations are not an end in themselves, but a means to an end. The real crime from the army's standpoint is that he lets the team down, which may lead to his doing so in action. In both these actions he misuses for his own ends something that belongs to the team as a whole.

This angle is the crux of almost every military regulation and policy you can think of—from the standpoint of the army itself, and of the soldier as a soldier. Consider the matter of venereal diseases. The effects of VD on the soldier himself as a man and a member of society

are too well known to need repetition here, and these effects properly constitute the individual soldier's chief concern. The army, while it is concerned with the human and sociological aspects to a large extent, is primarily concerned with venereal diseases because their contraction by a soldier lessens or negates his value to the team. VD is a self-inflicted wound and cannot be tolerated by the team.

VD Robs Army Of Fighting Power

During the last war the venereal diseases cost the United States Army 7,000,000 man-days lost from duty—the equivalent of an army of 1,000,000 men out of action for a week, or an infantry division disabled for a year. And these figures refer only to the direct loss of manpower; they take no account of the additional men required to care for those who were incapacitated.

Whole Team Suffers

Our army in the ETO now is somewhat better; due primarily to improved methods of treatment which lead to shorter periods of absence from duty. But even so, during 1943 the venereal diseases cost the United States Army in the United Kingdom an average of one day's absence from duty per man. If this same ratio were to prevail in an army of 1,000,000 men it would mean that there would be constantly off duty nearly one regiment incapacitated from venereal diseases—and at least three large hospitals with all their equipment and staff would be required to take care of them.

Within a football team of 11 men

there are smaller teams, if you stop to think about it. The line really constitutes a team of its own; the backfield constitutes another; center and quarterback form a team; on some plays the passer and the receiver, on others the running back and his interference, constitute a team—and all these teams go to make up THE team. In the army it is the same way, from squads all the way up to divisions. And the whole army itself is one element in a larger team which we call our society.

Family Health At Stake

So in inculcating military discipline among its soldiers, particularly in regard to VD, the army serves not only its own ends but those of the larger team as well. For the effect upon the future health of our people and our society could be disastrous if a large number of soldiers return to their homes capable of spreading venereal diseases.

Disciplinary training is a two-way street. It does not merely lead to military proficiency, to the army's own ends; it leads also to self-discipline, to the individual soldier's private benefit wholly apart from its benefit to the army. If you learn, for example, to take care of



A LOSS TO THE TEAM!



your clothes and equipment, to save money, to act in concert with others, and many other lessons the army teaches, you improve yourself not only as a soldier but as a man. You become a more efficient fighting man, which is essential, and you become a more substantial citizen.* The man who has learned self-discipline has become an asset to any organization under any conditions. He will be in demand.

General Cites Value

And discipline has positive values, as well as the negative ones of avoiding confusion and defeat. Major General M. B. Stewart, formerly of the General Staff, cited this example in a lecture at the United States Military Academy, which is reprinted in "The Officer's Guide."

"In the early days of the (last) war, during the retreat from Mons, a battalion of the British Guards division was holding an important bridge which was a pivotal point in the line. Much depended upon the holding of this bridge. It was a critical moment in the British retirement. The Germans had hurled division after division on this one battalion until it was all but wiped

out. A scant 30 men remained in a shallow trench. A few yards to their front was a deep ditch which led to the German flank. This handful of men was being attacked by masses of Germans eager to take the bridge.

Team Spirit Saves Day

"Suddenly a British Tommie, a mere boy, leaped to his feet and shouted: 'Guards will advance—Rush!' and what remained of the Guards rushed to what looked like certain death. They left their trench and followed that boy. Fifteen yards away they dropped into the ditch leading to the German flank and opened a rapid fire into the rear of the attacking masses. The Germans wavered, then halted. Finally came the command to retreat, and the whole line began to fall back. A little later reinforcements came up, and the bridgehead was safe.

"The young Tommie was cited in orders and decorated. The commanding general asked: 'Who gave the order to advance to that ditch?' He was told that it was the 18-year-old bugler. The astonished officer exclaimed: 'Good God, boy! How did you dare give such



an order?' The boy replied: 'It was the Guards, sir, and I knew they'd obey.' He knew the team, and he knew he could depend on the spirit of that team."

Training Pays In Battle

"It is such discipline," General Stewart continues, "which we must have to win battles—discipline which carries with it instant obedience, instant response to the will of the leader. There is no time for thought, no time to weigh conclusions. The order is given, it flashes to the brain of the soldier. Brain and muscle act instantly, without thought of the consequences."

"How are we to cultivate this discipline, this spirit that responds unhesitatingly to command when shells are bursting overhead, when bullets are whistling about our ears, when your bunkie crumples up beside you and when you know that the next moment may bring your death? How? The answer is, by training. What kind of training? Disciplinary training."

Rules Have A Purpose

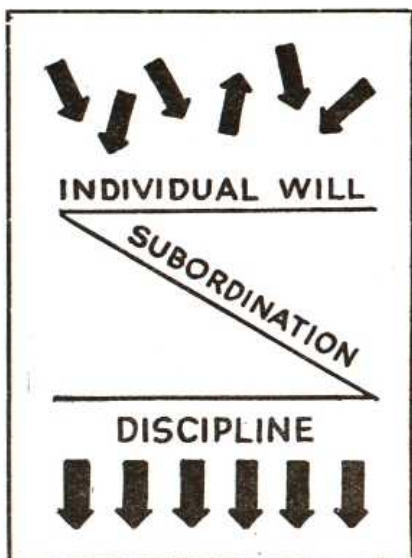
And that is what the army imposes. There are many forms of training. Among them are care of clothing and equipment, inspections of various kinds, saluting, close order drill, and other routine of army life with which every soldier is familiar.

Let's look for a moment at close

order drill. The average GI, before he stops to think about it, may well say to himself: "Gee, back in basic training, in my very first days in the army, I learned how to do column right, and to the rear, march. Why should I have to keep on practising it, and doing it again and again, when I already know how to do it?"

Rules Have Purpose In Group Effort

Well, looked at as a form of disciplinary training, close order drill appears in a different light. It is not at all a practice in performing the specific movement of column right, to the rear, march, and the other drill movements. It is practice, instead, in teamwork—in fusing an individual into a group so that he maintains a keen alertness and responds automatically and almost without thinking about it to the word of command—and acquires the habit of doing so. The same end



is served by group calisthenics and by such ceremonies as retreat.

SUMMARY 2

Offenses against discipline may sometimes be unimportant in themselves, but they have a grave effect on the team. Venereal diseases during the last war cost the equivalent of one infantry division disabled for one year. They can be cured more quickly now, but even so venereal disease in 1943 cost the

U.S. Army in the United Kingdom the equivalent of one day's absence per man. Discipline benefits the soldier individually as well as the army.

Is teamwork more, or less, essential in this war as compared to previous wars? What is the principal damage done by any breach of discipline, as far as the army itself is concerned? What relation do you see between the venereal disease situation and discipline?

Discipline

Close order drill is teamwork. Meaning of the salute. Punishment as a form of discipline.

In close order drill, more than in almost any other activity, it is demonstrated how vital teamwork is to the movements and operations of men in a group. For Private A, try as he may, cannot keep his rank dressed if Private B is not dressed on Private C. And Private B, though he execute rear march perfectly himself, will find himself stumbling if Private A has been out of step and has turned at the wrong time.

A soldier probably would not admit to outsiders, but he often has to himself, that a ragged drill or a man out of step makes him unhappy. While a snappy, precise drill, performed as it should be done, gives him an actual spiritual lift and makes him proud to be part of his platoon.

It is said that Frederick the Great instituted the goose-step in the German army on the theory that troops marching across a field under

Wins Wars

enemy fire in that fashion would be so busy concentrating on the difficult step that they would pay less attention to the musket balls. However that may be, in the American army close order drill is not a diversion from something else or a practice in performing pretty movements like a line of Roxyettes, but a means of developing the *habit* of responding to command, and fostering the soldier's sense of himself as a part of a team.

All right—let's look at saluting. Some GIs will say to themselves:

"Why should I have to salute that looie just because he's got bars on his shoulders and I haven't? I'm just as good as he is!"

Here again, look at it as a form of training—team training for both the officer and the enlisted man.

Saluting is not at all designed to constitute a recognition by the enlisted man of the officer's authority over him. If that were its purpose—if it were meant to remind the private constantly that the lieutenant is the boss—then that purpose could be even better served by relieving

the officer of the obligation to return the salute. But no—the officer is under exactly the same requirement to return the salute as the enlisted man is to render it. The salute is a recognition of comradeship and of respect.

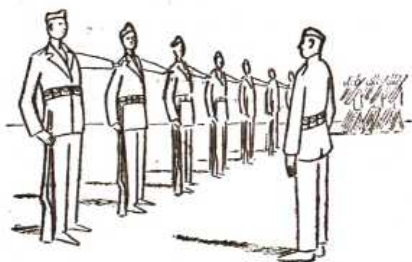
Salute Is Recognition

As the basic field manual (FM 21-50) on "Military Courtesy and Discipline" says, "The salute is not a mark of subservience, it is an indication of the possession of military courtesy and discipline by those who render it."

One other factor in the practice of saluting seems worth mentioning. It is set forth in an order from ETO Headquarters of March 1, 1944 (GO 20) thus: "To win battles soldiers must be alert, quick to recognize friend or foe. The habit of alertness—instantaneous recognition—is best achieved by eager, prompt saluting between officers and between officers and enlisted personnel of all the Services of the Allied Forces."

Training Regulations Foster Team Habit

So we see that the fostering of teamwork, the inculcating of the team habit, is what really lies behind close order drill and saluting. And this also lies behind the orders that a soldier's clothes be kept in good appearance, that they be hung on his hangers in a uniform manner, that his bed be made in a uniform way, and the other regulations imposed upon a soldier's manner of living. The anonymous GI who made the crack that the ETO should be called the ETI—"European Theater of Inspections"—apparently had not reflected upon

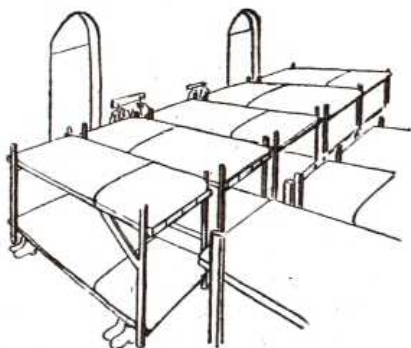


the intention of the training underlying the system. What was said of saluting—that it is not to emphasize the officer's authority over the men but to develop team spirit—is true also of inspections. They are made not to deprive the hapless Joe, whose shoes were unshined, of a night at the pub, although that is sometimes the effect, but to teach him he is part of his organization, with the responsibilities that go with it.

Punishment Impartial

At the outset of this article we saw that the word "discipline" had several meanings, and that one of these meanings was "punishment." Although, as we said, that is only an incidental phase of military discipline, let us consider the punishment aspect and see how that, too, fits into the whole picture.

When there is a breach of discipline and the officer punishes the soldier, the good officer will always punish the offense rather than the offender—the punishment will not be aimed at the soldier as an individual. The punishment will be impartial, administered in such a way that the soldier will feel that any offender, whoever he might be, would have been similarly dealt with; and in such a way that the soldier will bear no resentment against the officer who administers the punishment, as



the officer is required to do under the army system, as a part of the team himself. In this connection, see what the order from ETO headquarters which was referred to previously says: "Too often minor offenses against discipline are overlooked. Every infraction must be promptly dealt with, or disciplinary action taken against the officer who tolerates the offense."

D-Day Stiffens Rules

With a football team we may expect the coach to become stricter, the discipline more rigid as the day of the big game draws near. So also with an army.

Baron Von Steuben, the German military genius who drilled the

Continental Army and made a winning team out of a mob of individualistic citizens, commented of Americans: "The genius of this people is that one must first explain—and then give the order."

The soldier who does his duty will find and ponder the explanation and carry out the orders, all to one end. And that end is summed up in the phrase: "Fight, TEAM, fight!"

SUMMARY 3

Discipline can snatch victory from defeat in battle. Drill, saluting and inspections are measures for disciplinary training. Officers as well as enlisted men are subjected to it. Discipline is inculcated so that soldiers fight as a team.

What significance do you see in the incident of the British Guards battalion at Mons? Do you think such situations would be encountered more frequently in this war than in the last? What lies beneath the salute exchanged between officer and enlisted man? What is the purpose of close order drill by troops who have advanced beyond basic training?



Preparation

ALMOST 2,500 years ago 300 Spartan soldiers held the narrow mountain pass of Thermopylae for hours against an invading Persian army of 180,000 men. In order to give the rest of Greece time to prepare for the attack they fought to the last man, buying time with their lives. Two thousand five hundred years is a long time, but the world has not forgotten their exploit. Their courage, discipline and devotion to duty have made them immortal. In like fashion and for similar qualities the ragged Continentals at Valley Forge, the "gallant 600" of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, the American Marines on Wake Island, and the Red Army at Stalingrad are remembered.

Courage alone is not enough. A mob may be made up of individually brave men, but it cannot do the work of an army because it lacks disciplined teamwork. The record clearly proves that green men suffer much heavier casualties in battle than well disciplined troops.

An old Master Sergeant with a sleeve full of hash marks once told a story which suggests the distinction between the well disciplined soldier and the civilian in uniform: In the fourth-storey anteroom of a War Department office a Corporal was awaiting an interview. A Major came in carrying a package conspicuously labelled "FINE SWISS WATCHES—FRAGILE." Asking the Corporal to hold the package, the Major lit his pipe, then suddenly barked, "Throw that box out of the window!" Without a moment's hesitation the Corporal complied, then turned with a bit of apprehension in his eye. "That's fine, soldier," approved the Major, "you know how to obey orders. Don't worry about that empty box." Such instant and unquestioning obedience can mean the difference between life and death in combat. Incidentally, the Corporal got the assignment for which he was applying, and now wears three stripes and three rockers.

Soldiers need good discipline off as well as on the battlefield. Every man wearing an American uniform in foreign service, whether he realizes it or not, is serving as a personal representative of the United States. General Eisenhower expressed his desires on this subject in his letter to the Americans of his command of February 25, 1944. "It is vital that we work with the people of Great Britain, both in the fighting services and in civil life, on the basis of mutual respect, consideration and cooperation. This means that we must earn and keep their respect as a great military machine, dedicated to the single task of doing our duty in the winning of this war." The average Englishman is likely to form his opinions about America and

Americans on the impression we make as individuals. We owe it to our country, our allies, and ourselves to make that impression a good one. Self-discipline, like battle discipline, pays dividends."

A Marine officer, Colonel Evans Carlson, has organized a superb fighting unit, the "Gung Ho" Battalion, which provides an excellent example of efficient teamwork. Colonel Carlson built good morale by making sure each man knew what he was fighting for. A book has been published about the outfit entitled *Gung Ho*, and *Life Magazine*, September 20, 1943, had an article on Colonel Carlson and his men. The discussion leader could use this material as an example of how an effective fighting unit can be built by disciplined teamwork.

The discussion can be enriched if the unit commander could speak on disciplinary procedure as it applies on your post, camp, airdrome or station. For example, what modifications, if any, are desirable in military courtesy in the case of men working "on the line" in a fighter squadron? Perhaps a short talk by an NCO with extensive experience in the peacetime army on differences of discipline in peace and war-time would be of interest. Men with battle experience could discuss both the values of discipline in action and the contrast between outward manifestations of discipline in and out of the combat zone.

Any discussion group is likely to include a number of men who thoroughly enjoy this sort of debate. The wise leader will depend on these members to get the ball rolling and to inject new vigor into the discussion if it lags. But great care must be taken that those who are especially keen and eager do not monopolize the situation. One of the primary purposes of ARMY TALKS is to give every group member experience and sense of participation. The quiet boys in the back row should be encouraged to do their part. This can be achieved either by direct questions or by assigning brief reports to them in advance of the meeting. When the discussion leader approaches 100 per cent. participation he deserves congratulation for a really professional job.

Is the basic principle of civilian teamwork any different from that of military teamwork? Teamwork for the soldier, just as for the civilian, is based on the idea that the individual should give up some of his desires in the interest of the group. The star forward on the basketball team might like to take a long shot at the net from the center of the floor, but it is better for the team if he passes to his unguarded teammate standing on the foul line. Good teamwork requires confidence in the chap giving the orders, whether he be the captain of the basketball squad or the platoon commander. The army does, however, demand a greater subordination of individual desires than does civilian life. The reason for this is clear—bad teamwork on the basketball court or in business may lose the game or a sale; bad teamwork in combat costs lives.

QUESTIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION

How can the American tradition of independent thought and individualism be reconciled with the rigid discipline required in an efficient army? Americans are, by and large, sensible and mature in their judgments. If the individual understands why we are in this war he will be willing to temporarily sacrifice some of his personal freedom of action in order to build a team which can effectively rescue our way of life from the Nazi threat and preserve American liberties for himself and his children.

What is the relationship between venereal disease and teamwork? The efficiency of the combat team can be seriously crippled by a "I don't give a damn" attitude on the part of individual soldiers. But even a larger team is involved, since the good understanding of the United Nations and the health of future generations might suffer if the problem got out of hand.

As a member of the AEF team, what is the responsibility of the

individual soldier toward the civilian population of the countries in which he is stationed? Being stationed in the territory of an allied country gives our troops a golden opportunity to learn to understand our allies and their problems. It also gives our allies an opportunity to get to know us. A good team-member will remember his responsibility as an "American Ambassador," and will behave in such a way as to contribute his bit towards international understanding.



